

## Message Text

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R 110900Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7438

AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

UNCLAS OUAGADOUGOU 0039

FOR SPENCER FROM BARON

PARIS FOR HELMAN

E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJ: TAC VIEWS ON CROP PRODUCTION POSSIBILITIES

REF: A) OUAGA 0036 B) BARON-SPENCER LETTER, JAN 4.

1. DURING JAN 9 MEETING WITH AUDIBERT (REFTEL A), WE RAISED QUESTION OF POSSIBILITY, WITHIN REACH SAHELIAN SUDANESE DRY LAND FARMERS, OF DRASTICALLY INCREASING FARM YIELDS OF MILLET AND POSSIBLY SORGHUM. WE NOTED DISCUSSIONS WITH AGRICULTURAL SPECIALISTS IN NIGER HAD REVEALED VIRTUAL UNANIMITY ON THEIR PART THAT MILLET FIELDS COULD BE DOUBLED BY A PACKAGE OF PRACTICES INCLUDING BETTERSEED, CULTURAL PRACTICES AND USE OF MANURE OR RELATIVELY SMALL AMOUNTS OF CHEMICAL FERTILIZER. SUCH RESULTS ALREADY ACHIEVED IN SAMPLE VILLAGES OF MATOURKOU PROJECT IN UPPER VOLTA AND AT MARADI IN NIGER, AS WELL AS AT IRAT STATIONS IN BOTH COUNTRIES. WE SUGGESTED THAT IF THESE SPECIALISTS WERE CORRECT THEN

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THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE COUNTRIES CONCERNED HAD A

MARVELOUS OPPORTUNITY TO HELP FARMERS INCREASE THEIR FARM EFFICIENCY, INCOME AND STANDARD OF LIVING AND AT THE SAME TIME ADDRESS THE DIFFICULT FOOD BALANCE PROBLEM OF RECENT DROUGHT YEARS.

2. AUDIBERT NOTED THAT FOR SOME YEARS HE HAD BEEN LOOKING TO I.R.A.T. (INSTITUT DE RECHERCHE AGRONOMIQUES TROPICALES) FOR ANSWERS ABOUT THE POTENTIAL OF NEW GENETIC STRAINS OF SEED WHICH MIGHT HELP EFFECT A "GREEN REVOLUTION" PROCESS IN AFRICAN AREAS. HE SAID THAT ONLY RECENTLY, WITHIN THE PAST THREE MONTHS, THE I.R.A.T. PEOPLE HAD COME TO HIM SAYING THAT IN THEIR OPINION THE BASIC RESEARCH HAD BEEN ACCOMPLISHED AND THAT IT WAS NOW POSSIBLE TO DEMONSTRATE UNDER AFRICAN FARMER CONDITIONS VERY SUBSTANTIAL INCREASES IN YIELDS OF MAJOR FOOD CROPS; MILLET, SORGHUM AND CORN (MAIZE).

3. WE NOTED NIGER'S REQUEST TO RDO (REF B) FOR U.S. EXPERT APPRAISAL OF POSSIBILITIES, AND AUDIBERT URGED US TO RESPOND FAVORABLY.

4. IN COURSE OF DISCUSSION, VARIOUS PROBLEMS OF EXPANDING CEREAL PRODUCTIVITY WERE REVIEWED, SUCH AS IMPORTANCE OF PRODUCER PRICE, LACK OF ADEQUATE ADVISORY/ EXTENSION CAPABILITY IN MANY COUNTRIES, COST OF FERTILIZER, ETC. AUDIBERT THOUGHT THAT NIGER MIGHT BE IN A BETTER POSITION THAN SOME COUNTRIES BECAUSE OF THE UNCC (UNION NIGERIEN DE CREDIT ET DE COOPERATION) AND BECAUSE OF THE RELATIVE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE OPVN (GRAIN MARKETING OFFICE).

5. COMMENT: IF MEETING OF DONORS AND CILSS TAKES PLACE END FEBRUARY AS PROPOSED BY DAKOURE, THIS MIGHT BE A USEFUL ITEM TO INCLUDE ON AGENDA.EASUM

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